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CONNECTING BACK TO MY BREATH

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Malorie Mackey is an actress, host, and writer living in Los Angeles, CA. Malorie's first book was published in 2017 and her short story "What Love Has Taught Me" has been published in the anthology "Choices." You can find Malorie's travel content on dozens of digital media platforms. Check out www.maloriesadventures.com for more. Malorie's adventures don't just encompass physical adventures. She has been a student of intuition since she was a teenager, studying at Edgar Cayce's A.R.E. In 2019, Malorie discovered the Monroe Institute while filming her travel show. Since then, she has been studying the art and science of consciousness through many different programs and life experiences.

Everything always comes back to our breath, right? Breath is one of the essential keys of life, along with a heartbeat, and by mastering our breath we can master our bodies and beyond. Think about it, if you've ever had a panic attack or dealt with overall feelings of anxiety and sought counseling, the first thing psychotherapists may teach you is breath exercises. By controlling your breath and focusing on breathing a certain way, you can convince your body to calm down or behave differently. Lamaze classes are crucial to those who are about to give birth, and breath is a core teaching behind that, too. As we bring life into this world, we are coached to control our breathing. And many types of meditation focus on breath control, from mindfulness to deeper meditations. So, it's safe to say that breath control is important to master throughout our lives.

When I began feeling anxious and hopeless the other day, I stopped and moved my focus directly to my breath. It's taken a long time for me to think about my breath control when things get rough, but I'm proud to say that it's finally becoming an instinct. When the world gets loud around me, I can easily forget to stop and breathe. Luckily, as my anxiety built yesterday, I remembered the sheer importance of stopping and breathing. After all, our breath can help anchor us here, connect us to deeper levels, or allow us to expand more easily, depending on our intention.

If you find yourself in a bad mindset while you are out and don't have your Expand app or another guided meditation handy, you still have a few options to help calm yourself. When this happens to me, I quickly excuse myself and move to somewhere private—perhaps my car or a bathroom stall—and breathe consciously. If you can simply clear

your mind and hear your breath getting slower and slower, you can begin to release that which isn't serving you anymore. What I find helps me in these situations is to say in my mind, "inhale" as I inhale and "exhale" as I exhale. Or, I count to four as I breathe in, then count to four again as I breathe out. Once my breath is calm, I just listen to it and allow myself to anchor back into the world.

I found this lovely exercise in the Expand app the other day that I have been using when I find myself getting anxious or upset while at home. The exercise is called "5 Minute Release What No Longer Serves You." I find that when I can no longer function in the day because I'm feeling weighed down by too much, I can put on my headphones, lie back, and play this exercise. As I participate in it, I focus on my breath and bringing in a healing energy while releasing what I don't need. Even if I can't exactly name or pinpoint what I am releasing from myself, I know it's for my highest good, and I accept it. After doing this exercise and taking a few minutes for myself, I find that I feel as if the weight has been lifted from my shoulders. When you find you need a break at home, I strongly encourage you to try this exercise.

Sometimes, when the world looks dark, the solution really is as simple as connecting back to breath, breathing in goodness, breathing out the negative, and releasing the weight from our shoulders. Often, that's all it takes to put the pep back in our step, motivate us to move forward and enable us to smile again.